AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the present application.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-17 (Canceled).

Claims 18-21 (Canceled).

22. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for fluorescence observation comprising laser light used as exciting light, and an absorption filter which blocks the exciting light and transmits only fluorescence generated from a specimen irradiated with the exciting light,

wherein the absorption filter includes a multilayer film having 90 or more film layers, and an interval between a wavelength of the laser light and a half-value wavelength of the absorption filter on a short-wavelength side is within a width between 1nm to 12nm.

23. (Previously Presented) The apparatus for fluorescence observation according to claim 22, wherein the interval between the wavelength of the laser light and the half-value wavelength of the absorption filter on the short-wavelength side is within a width between 6 nm to 12 nm.

24. (Previously Presented) The apparatus for fluorescence observation according to claim 22, wherein change of the half-value wavelength of the absorption filter when humidity changes from 10% to 95%, is 0.5 nm or less.

25. (Previously Presented) The apparatus for fluorescence observation according to claim 22, wherein the multilayer film of the absorption filter is laminated of alternately arranged low refractive index films made of SiO_2 and ~~a~~ high refractive index films made of one of or any mixture of Ta_2O_5, Nb_2O_5 and TiO_2, and the multilayer film is applied to at least one surface of a substrate of the absorption filter.

Claims 26-31 (Canceled).